

C.8.15.3 After verifying the applicant's eligibility to file an application, the contractor will hand stamp the application serial number on selected pages of the application and on all other documents which will not feed smoothly through the scanning equipment. If a check was submitted with the application, the contractor will insure the check is securely fastened to the Transmittal Letter or some other hand-stamped page. The contractor **must** insure the serial number stamped on the application pages is identical to the serial number on the bar code affixed to the file jacket(s) and that the stamped number is clearly legible.

C.8.15.4 The contractor shall prepare the remaining application documents for machine endorsing by removing staples, clips, or loose tape; smoothing badly wrinkled pages; mending torn pages; and loosening pages which may stick together. For each application, the contractor shall set the endorsing machine for the correct serial number and shall insert the application pages into the hopper with the printed side up. The contractor shall ensure that all pages are properly endorsed and the serial number shown is identical to that on the file jacket bar code label; any pages damaged during the endorsing process shall be mended and, if necessary, re-endorsed.

C.8.15.5 After all pages have been properly endorsed, the contractor shall insert the application pages and the Search Copy file jacket, if present, into the Home Copy file jacket and shall secure the application with one or more rubber bands. Completed applications shall be delivered to the designated location(s).

C.8.15.6 The Government will inspect the contractor's work in accordance with the Inspection and Acceptance Plan set forth in Section E. The contractor shall immediately correct any deficiencies identified during inspection at no additional cost to the Government.

C.8.16 FINANCIAL DATA CAPTURE (CLIN 21e)

C.8.16.1 On a daily basis and using personal computers the contractor shall post *all fees received in OIPE via the mailroom and the Customer Services Window including, but not limited to, application fees, petition fees, and issue fees.* Fees are received either by check or authorization to deduct fees from specified deposit accounts.

C.8.16.2 Using information provided by the Government and/or the applicant, the contractor shall enter the predetermined fee code(s), the associated fee amount(s), the application serial number, and any other required information into the Revenue Accounting and Management System (RAM). *Where previously recorded fees are to be replaced by newly received fees, the contractor shall first "back out" of RAM the appropriate previously recorded fees. In accordance with PTO policies, the contractor shall process required refunds (e.g., as a result of overpayments).* After keying in the appropriate information, the contractor shall insure that all fee transaction information is properly annotated on all documents by inserting the first page of the document into the endorser and striking the print key. *PALM information shall be updated as required.*

C.8.16.3 Prior to entering fee information into RAM, the contractor shall verify the serial number on the document is identical to the serial number on the check. Discrepancies shall immediately be forwarded to the Government.

C.8.16.4 At the end of each day, the contractor shall generate a printout of that day's work and shall compare the information on the printout

to the information on each application for which fees were entered. The contractor shall correct all erroneous entries until reconciliation is complete. At the end of each day, all documents keyed shall then be taken to the designated location for pickup by Finance.

C.8.16.5 The contractor shall process all fees within 24 hours of their receipt. A quality and accuracy level of 100% is required. If a second shift is determined to be operationally necessary in order to meet these requirements, the Government will provide H/VAC operation for this shift, except for those times when the system is unavailable due to maintenance (normally April and October) or some other operational problem. At the end of a fiscal year, the contractor is required to take whatever steps are necessary to insure all fees are processed prior to year-end closing of the financial records.

C.8.17 BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA CAPTURE (CLIN 21f)

C.8.17.1 Using personal computers or PALM equipment, the contractor shall key prescribed bibliographic data from application documents received in PCT. The contractor shall insure the application serial number which is data entered agrees with the serial number contained on the file jacket and on each application document.

C.8.17.2 Prior to beginning data entry, the contractor shall perform any required PALM transaction(s). The contractor shall locate the required information on the application documents and shall enter this data into the appropriate data entry screen. Before beginning data entry on the next application, the contractor shall quality check the data entered for the application currently in hand.

C.8.17.3 Each application for which data entry has been completed shall be charged out using the PALM terminal and docketed to an LIE for examination. Applications shall be batched in groups of five to which a batch sheet shall be affixed and the batch delivered to the designated location(s).

C.8.17.4 The Government will inspect the contractor's work in accordance with the Inspection and Acceptance Plan set forth in Section E. The contractor shall immediately correct any deficiencies identified during inspection at no additional cost to the Government.

C.8.18 DOCUMENT RECEIPT AND MAILING (CLIN 22)

C.8.18.1 Application files, application-related documents, and other mail are delivered to the Tech Centers' mail receipt areas at least three times each day. New applications forwarded from the Office of Initial Patent Examination (OIPE) and applications being returned to the Tech Centers from other areas of the PTO are all delivered to the mail receipt areas. Applications and application-related documents must be sorted and batched. All materials delivered to a receipt center must be processed prior to the next scheduled mail delivery.

C.8.18.2 The contractor shall insure that information for all applications received is correctly entered into the PALM system. If the PALM system is non-operational, the contractor shall notify the Government Representative immediately but shall continue processing. If the PALM system is still not operating by the time the contractor is ready to make deliveries,

a sheet indicating "PALM DOWN--CASE NOT CHARGED IN" shall be affixed to each application as appropriate.

C.8.18.3 New application files forwarded from OIPE shall be sorted by AU and delivered to the appropriate location for each Tech Center as identified in information provided by the Tech Center. All other-than-new applications shall be sorted and delivered to the correct Tech Support Team. The contractor shall insure that all applications are delivered to the appropriate processing team or its designated delivery location within 2 hours of receipt. Mail addressed to specific individuals in a Tech Center (e.g., Group Director, SPE) shall be delivered to designated locations and placed in the appropriate mail slot(s).

C.8.18.4 Each miscellaneous application document delivered to the Mail Receipt Center shall have the current date stamped in the upper right corner. These miscellaneous documents shall be sorted, batched (including attachment of batch sheet), and placed for Application File Retrieval after determining the required turnaround time:

--1 hour turnaround -- After Final amendments, amendments with PTO received dates older than 20 days, and documents with checks attached;

--8-hour turnaround -- all other documents.

Documents will be processed and ready for File Retrieval pickup in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Mail Received By</u>	<u>Processing Completed By</u>	<u>File Retrieval Pickup</u>
8:45 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
10:45 a.m.	12 noon	1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
1:45 p.m.	7:00 a.m. (Next day)	7:00 - 8:00 a.m.

C.8.18.5 FAX machines are installed throughout the Technology Centers for the receipt of incoming application-related documents. At least twice each workday, the contractor shall check each FAX machine in the Tech Centers (see Appendix 1 for locations) and shall insure the proper toner level and paper supply. If a machine requires a service call, the HSLIE should be notified promptly.

C.8.18.6 At least twice each workday, the contractor shall check each FAX machine to determine the presence of incoming materials. Each incoming document shall be stamped with the Group's date stamp and shall be recorded in the FAX receipt log. Incoming "Official" faxes shall be batched and placed for the next scheduled Application File Retrieval pickup with 1-hour turnaround required and the appropriate Tech Support Team identified on the batch sheet. Incoming "Unofficial" application papers and other documents directed to a specific examiner will be delivered to the examiner's mailbox within 2 hours of pickup from the machine. Any incoming incomplete or otherwise unusable document shall have this fact noted on the receipt log and shall be delivered to the designated Government Rep.

C.8.18.7 When checking a fax machine for incoming documents, the contractor shall determine whether any requests for transmission of outgoing materials are present. If requests are present, the contractor shall promptly fax the material(s) to the designated location(s) after which the outgoing document(s) and the initialed and dated request sheet should be placed in the

"Completed" box. If after several attempts the contractor is unable to complete transmission of an outgoing fax, this fact should be noted on the request form and the document/request form package returned to the Government Rep.

C.8.18.8 Twice each day (i.e., once in the morning and once in the afternoon) the contractor shall perform pickups and deliveries within the tech center and to certain specified external locations. The contractor **will not** be responsible for PALMING applications retrieved under this task.

C.8.18.9 At least twice each workday, the contractor shall pick up from designated locations application files containing office actions to be mailed. Each document pickup shall be recorded on the log sheet placed at each pickup location; log sheets will be collected by the Government each biweek. Files shall be taken to the contractor's document mailing work area and location information promptly changed in the PALM system. If the PALM system is non-operational, the contractor shall notify the COTR or her designee immediately and request further instructions.

C.8.18.10 To prepare each office action for mailing, the contractor shall insert the appropriate form into the printer connected to the PALM terminal and shall perform the required PALM transaction to print the name and address contained in the PALM data base in the designated location on the upper part of the form. The information on the printed form must be appropriately placed and clearly readable or the contractor shall take the appropriate action to reprint the form in the required manner.

C.8.18.11 The contractor shall perform a final quality check of any reference copies contained in a file after which one set of the copies shall be inserted in the appropriate mailing envelope and one set inserted in the bottom center section of the application file. Any additional copies will be processed as instructed by the Government.

C.8.18.12 The contractor shall separate the copies of any office action printed on a multi-part form and shall place the original copy in the application file. The second copy shall be folded and inserted in the appropriate envelope insuring the mailing address is clearly visible through the envelope's window. After sealing the envelope, the contractor shall stamp the mail date in the appropriate location on the file wrapper (see Section J, exhibit 21). All envelopes ready for mailing shall be placed in the designated mail pickup location; application files shall be returned to central files unless other instructions are provided by the Government.

C.8.18.13 The contractor shall insure that all application files which require mail transactions and are placed in the designated pickup locations by 12 noon on any given work day are picked up, processed, the outgoing document given that day's date, and the outgoing envelope placed in the designated mail pickup location in time for that day's last mail pickup (approximately 1:30 p.m.). All application files placed in the designated pickup location after 12 noon shall be processed using the next day's transaction code and shall be placed in the designated mail pickup location no later than the next day's last mail pickup.

C.8.18.14 As requested by the Government Representative, the contractor shall provide immediate processing of applications provided to the contractor by 12:30 p.m. on any work day in order to insure their inclusion in that day's last mail pickup.

C.8.18.15 The contractor is required to plan his work to account for non-operational PALM equipment or other PALM outages and to accomplish the required turnaround times despite high volumes of work normally encountered just before and immediately after "count Monday" (the first Monday of a pay period). The Government will not be held responsible for delays created by PALM problems. Inability to meet turnaround because of unusually large drops of work at the last minute and/or PALM downtime should be referred to the COTR or her designee for resolution.

C.8.18.16 The Government will inspect the contractor's work in accordance with the Inspection and Acceptance Plan set forth in Section E. Unacceptable work shall be redone immediately by the contractor who will insure the corrected work is available to the PTO mailroom in sufficient time for metering and pickup by the US Post Office at the end of the day.

C.9 REQUIRED STANDARDS

C.9.1 PATENT COPIES

C.9.1.1 Patent Copies Reproduced or Otherwise Obtained by the Contractor Under Locating Patent Copies or for Use by the Government.

C.9.1.1.1 To ensure the quality of a patent copy reproduced or otherwise obtained by the Contractor is acceptable by Government standards, specific requirements have been established. A patent copy is acceptable when:

- the paper meets the minimum specifications,
- the images are distinct and properly centered,
- the document is legible and complete,
- all drawings are single-sided copies,
- all textual material is duplexed, and
- the pages are properly stapled together.

C.9.1.1.2 The following paper specifications meet the minimum Government requirements:

--Weight	28 pound (for U.S. patent copies)
--Caliper	.0054 inches
--Archival life	Type I (200+ years)
--Cut	Rotary (5 sheet)
--Paper Type	Photographic
--Moisture Content	4-4.5% RH
--Wax pick	Medium
(surface lint)	
--Smoothness	Very High
--Rag Content	Very Low
--Curl	Low
--Size of U.S. Patent Copies	7 3/4 inches by 11 3/16 inches
--Size of Foreign Patent Copies	210 mm x 297 mm (A4 paper)

C.9.1.1.3 The Contractor shall produce all copies on paper meeting the preceding specification unless otherwise specified by the COTR or a designated Government Representative. By itself, use of the specified paper does not constitute an acceptable copy.

C.9.1.1.4 Paper copies produced by the Contractor must be an acceptable substitute for patent copies printed by offset reproduction. Images shall be centered on the page to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance. The following minimum quality standards shall apply to all copies produced:

--Resolution:	120-line pairs per inch
--Black Image:	0.85 optical density on a line
--Background:	No more than 3 percent darker than unprocessed paper.

C.9.1.1.5 Patent copies produced from APS using the high-speed printer must be printed on 28 lb. paper, contain all pages, and be clearly legible. The correct classification label must be printed on the upper left corner of the first page of the patent. Copies containing a skewed image which is otherwise legible are acceptable.

C.9.1.1.6 All pages of U.S. patent copies must be assembled in the correct order and stapled together at the bottom of the sheets with two flat staples approximately 4 inches apart and centered from the right and left edges of the sheets.

C.9.1.1.7 All pages of foreign patent documents must be assembled in the correct order and stapled on the left side with three flat staples placed equal distance apart. When reproducing foreign patents, the English language abstract shall be attached to the document as its first page.

C.9.1.2 Acceptable Existing U.S. Patent Copies

C.9.1.2.1 Patent copies contained in the PSF or ESF are of varying quality. The same standards shall apply to all existing patent copies whether they are photographic or offset print copies.

C.9.1.2.2 An existing patent copy is acceptable for Reclassification Preprocessing if it meets the following standards.

--The patent copy is complete and contains all pages figures, claims, and identifying data.

EXCEPTION: A patent copy numbered 500,000 or below is acceptable "as is" provided a better quality or more complete copy is not available elsewhere. The patent copy should be stamped "Best Available Copy."

--The patent copy must be intact and not faded to the extent that it is difficult to read. Any copy which is torn, worn around the edges, or faded as to be difficult to read is not acceptable and must be mended or replaced.

--If the best possible copy of a patent has been obtained but the image is still blurred, faded, or otherwise unclear, the Contractor shall not attempt to improve printed matter by any means. Any such copy should be stamped "Best Available Copy."

--The patent copy is stapled together at the bottom of its pages with 2 staples approximately 4 inches apart.

--The existing soft copy (i.e., one made on less than 28 pound paper) meets all other standards.

C.9.1.2.3 For existing patent copies, varying patent sizes are acceptable if they do not exceed 7 3/4 inches by 11 3/16 inches. The maximum size must not be exceeded because a larger size will not fit in all of the shoe cases. A patent copy exceeding these dimensions must be copied to fit the dimensions listed above.

C.9.1.2.4 An existing patent copy is acceptable for all other processing if it meets the following standards.

--The patent copy is complete and contains all pages, figures, claims, and identifying data.

EXCEPTION: A patent copy numbered 500,000 or below is acceptable "as is" provided a better quality or more complete copy is not available elsewhere. The patent copy should be stamped "Best Available Copy."

--The patent copy must be intact and not faded to the extent that it is difficult to read. Any copy which is torn, worn around the edges, or faded as to be difficult to read is not acceptable and must be mended or replaced.

--If the best possible copy of a patent has been obtained but the image is still blurred, faded, or otherwise unclear, the Contractor must not attempt to improve printed matter by any means. Any such copy should be stamped "Best Available Copy."

--The patent copy is a hard copy (i.e., on 28 pound or heavier paper).

--The existing patent copy contains single-sided drawing(s) and duplexed textual material.

--The patent copy is stapled at the bottom of its pages with 2 staples approximately 4 inches apart.

--The patent copy is no larger than 7 3/4 inches by 11 3/16 inches. Any copy exceeding this size must be copied to be in accordance with the standards outlined in section 3.1A.

C.9.1.3 Office Action Reference Copies

C.9.1.3.1 Document copies reproduced by the Contractor for inclusion in office action mailings must be of the highest possible quality. Copies are acceptable when the following requirements are met:

- images are distinct and properly centered to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance,
- the document is legible and complete,
- and the pages are properly stapled together.

C.9.1.3.2 The Contractor shall produce all copies on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper and shall insure the following minimum standards are met.

- Resolution: 120 line pairs per inch
- Black Image: 0.85 optical density on a line

--Background: No more than 3 percent darker than unprocessed paper.

C.9.1.3.3 Copies containing blurred images, incorrectly registered images, or other deficiencies resulting in failure to meet the preceding quality requirements are not considered acceptable. The pages of all copies must be stapled together with one staple in the upper left hand corner.

C.9.1.4 International Application Copies

C.9.1.4.1 The Contractor shall provide camera ready copies of International Applications reproduced as part of the PCT Copying function. Such copies shall, at a minimum, meet the following requirements:

--images are distinct and properly centered to present an aesthetically pleasing appearance,
 --the document is legible and complete,
 --and the pages are properly stapled together.

C.9.1.4.2 The Contractor shall produce all copies on A4 paper and shall insure the following minimum standards are met:

--Resolution: 120 line pairs per inch
 --Black Image: 0.85 optical density on a line
 --Background: No more than 3 percent darker than unprocessed paper.

C.9.1.4.3 In addition, all International Application copies must conform to the following specifications.

Margins for sheets containing the description, the claims, and the abstract:

top	no less than 2 cm and no more than 4 cm
left side	no less than 2.5 cm and no more than 4cm
right side	no less than 2 cm and no more than 3 cm
bottom	no less than 2 cm and no more than 3 cm.

Sheets containing drawing:

The surface usable shall not exceed 26.2 cm x 17.0 cm. The minimum margins are:

top	2.5 cm
left side	2.5 cm
right side	1.5 cm
bottom	1.0 cm.

C.9.1.4.3 Copies containing blurred images, incorrectly registered images, or other deficiencies resulting in failure to meet the preceding quality requirements are not considered acceptable. Most of the copies will be inserted into application files and should not be stapled. However, if stapling is directed by the Government, the pages shall be stapled together with one staple in the upper left hand corner.

C.9.2 EXAMINER SEARCH FILE

C.9.2.1 The storage drawers where the ESF documents are housed are referred to as "shoes." These drawers or shoes are arranged in cabinets called "shoecases" and are individually labeled to allow for easy identification of contents. Currently, various types of shoecases are used within the PTO ESF areas: Natural wood, beige metal, gray metal, and wood-design metal. The average size case consists of 3 columns holding a total of approximately 81 shoes; however, many cases are available which consist of 2 or 4 columns of shoes. Shoes are utilized within each column from top to bottom.

C.9.2.2 Prior to returning documents to the search files, the Contractor shall inspect the physical condition of the search file shoes and cases. The Contractor shall report all deficient conditions found at the time of inspection to the Government. A deficient condition exists in an ESR when patents cannot be properly refiled. Examples of deficient conditions include but are not limited to: Documents stacked on top of shoecases or in boxes; shoes which do not close because of overcrowding; labels which do not correctly reflect the shoes' contents, and missing label holders.

C.9.2.3 The number of documents housed within a shoe shall not be less than 2 inches thick and shall not exceed 2.5 inches thick unless advised otherwise by the Government Representative. This minimum requirement shall not apply to (1) the last shoe within each classification (class/subclass) containing patent copies or patent-related materials or (2) any shoe containing a subclass whose entire contents are less than 2 inches thick.

C.9.2.4 Each shoe is equipped with an anchored label holder. The Contractor shall replace all shoe labels that are missing and/or are no longer an accurate identification of the contents of the shoe(s). The Contractor shall place the proper colored shoe label in the label holder of each shoe used to store documents.

C.9.2.5 The Government will provide the Contractor with a supply of the following shoe labels (see Section J, exhibit 2):

PTO-666 White: to be used to identify all shoes containing U.S. patent copies;

PTO-666 Pink: to be used to identify all shoes containing foreign patent documents filed by U.S. classification(s);

PTO-666 Yellow: to be used to identify all shoes containing foreign patent documents filed on the basis of the International Patent Classification (IPC) system;

PTO-666 Blue: to be used to identify all shoes containing NPL.

C.9.2.6 Within each search room, classifications (i.e., class/subclass) are maintained in numeric sequence unless directed otherwise by the Government. Within each classification, documents are filed in patent number sequence in the order discussed below. Within each shoe, the oldest document shall be located on the top with the newest document on the bottom.

C.9.2.6.1 U.S. patent copies shall be filed in the shoes in patent number sequence within classification. Each individual shoe shall

be identified by a PTO-666 (white) label displaying the following information:

- the class/subclass (e.g., 320/23), and
- the patent number range within the shoe (e.g., 4,953,630 - 4,999,999).

C.9.2.6.2 The label for the first shoe within each subclass shall begin with "0" as the lower limit. The label on subsequent shoes for each subclass shall always begin with the lowest patent number filed in that shoe. The label for the last shoe of each subclass shall have the upper limit defined as "To Date."

C.9.2.6.3 Foreign patent documents filed by U.S. Classification shall be filed in the shoes in publication date sequence within classification unless otherwise directed by the Government. Foreign patent copies which recently have undergone Reclassification or File Improvement processing or have been recently issued shall be filed by patent copy sequence number which is a derivative of the publication date. All other foreign patent copies are to be filed by reference to the publication data shown on the document. Where more than one document contains the same publication date, the documents shall be filed in alphabetical order, by country, within the publication date. Each individual shoe shall be identified by a PTO-666 (pink) label displaying the following information:

- the word "Foreign" in bold print,
- the class/subclass (e.g., 320/23), and
- the publication date range within the shoe (e.g., Jan. 1993 - Dec. 1993).

C.9.2.6.4 The label for the first shoe within each subclass shall begin with "0" as the lower limit. The label on subsequent shoes for each subclass shall begin with the lowest publication date filed in that shoe. The label of the last shoe of each classification shall always define "To Date" as the upper limit.

C.9.2.6.5 Foreign patent documents filed by IPC shall be filed in the shoes in "publication date sequence within classification, unless otherwise directed by the Government. Each individual shoe shall be identified by a PTO-666 (yellow) label displaying the following information:

- the word "Foreign" in bold print,
- and the IPC Subclass and Group designation (e.g., A61K 001, where A61K represents the IPC sub-class, and 001 represents the IPC Group). In many instances, the shoe label will specify a range of IPC classification information (e.g., A61K 001/00-06). The numerals following the slash (/) mark (00-06) indicate further subdivision of the IPC classification system into subgroups. In the example cited, all documents falling within a classification range of A61K 001/00 through and including A61K 001/06 will be filed in the shoe so labeled.

C.9.2.6.6 Special Document Filing Requirements

Certificates of Correction, Disclaimer, Dedication, and Patent Term Extension; Reexamination Certificates; and Adverse Decisions.

The Contractor shall file a Certificate of Correction, Disclaimer, etc. (hereinafter referred to as Certificate) by first locating the

document corresponding to the patent number and classification indicated on the Certificate, then attaching each Certificate to the back side of the first page of the patent. The Contractor shall attach the Certificate to the document using two staples along the right hand edge of the Certificate with the front side of the Certificate facing the second page of this document.

Reissue Patents

All Reissue patent copies shall be filed in the shoes in patent number sequence within the classification shown on the label.

Defensive Publication Documents

These documents are identified by a "T" preceding the document number; e.g., T123,456. Such documents are considered NPL and shall be filed by publication date sequence along with other NPL. These documents were replaced by SIR documents in 1986.

Statutory Invention Registration Documents (SIR)

These documents are identified by an "H" preceding the document number; e.g., H123,456. Such documents are considered NPL and shall be filed by publication date sequence along with other NPL. These documents replaced Defensive Publication Documents in 1986.

Alien Property Custodian Documents (APC)

These documents are identified by the words "Alien Property Custodian" along the top of the first page of the document. Such documents are considered NPL and shall be filed by publication date sequence along with other NPL.

C.9.3 Quality Control

C.9.3.1 The Contractor shall establish a complete Quality Control Program to ensure that the requirements of the contract are provided for as specified. One copy of the Contractor's Quality Control Program shall be submitted with the proposal. At a minimum, the program shall include (1) an inspection system covering all the services to be performed under the contract, including identification of areas to be inspected and whether such inspections are on a scheduled or unscheduled basis; (2) the title of the individual(s) in charge of such inspections; (3) a method for identifying deficiencies in the quality of services performed before the level of performance becomes unacceptable; and (4) a file of all Contractor conducted inspections, identified deficiencies, and corrective action(s) taken.

C.9.3.2 The Contractor shall submit a written description of the inspection system to the COTR on contract start date and shall notify the COTR in writing of any changes which occur in the system. In addition, documentation of deficiencies found and corrective action taken by the Contractor shall be made available to the Government throughout the life of the contract.